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857 that they have two heads, but the explana-
291 tion is that they generally carry a younger
[855] brother or sister on their back because the
[512] mother is at work in the house and cannot look after them.

212 It is a fact that all Tibetans are literate,
857 men and women alike. Whatever class
779 they belong to, between the ages of 8 and
871 12 they have to go to the monastery to learn the Buddhist religion, learning to read and write at the same time. This gives these people a very high standard of culture.

595 The first thing to grasp in Tibetan
428 polyandry is that the Tibetans are very
● 123 keen to keep the property together. The
592 country is poor, and they feel that if the property is divided among several heirs there will not be enough to go around. They not only wish to keep the property intact but also to maintain the family name to this property. Thus, when a certain number of brothers, let us say, three, inherit the property and the house, they do not divide it among themselves but, marrying one woman as they do, they share not only the property but also the woman as a common wife, as well as the children which belong to all of them together. It is a kind of family communism, and certainly prevents division of the property.

595 Thus, the usual type of marriage is that
428 a number of brothers marry one woman
[601] and keep the property. This is called a *bagma* marriage in Tibetan. However, if
581 there are only girls in the family, what
592 usually happens is that the younger girls go off and marry into other families, individually becoming the common wives of a number of brothers. They thus perform the regular *bagma* marriage. The eldest daughter, however, since she has no brothers, inherits both the name and property from her fathers and and is allowed to marry as many husbands as she wishes. These husbands and the children, too, take her name, so that, in this way, the children which issue from the marriage take on the mother's name and inherit the property undivided, and again make regular *bagma*

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entitled to share the daughter-in-law with their sons. That, as I say, is practiced only in central Tibet but is well known in the entire country. The children issued from such a marriage legally have as fathers those to whom the wife was officially married at the moment of the birth. That is, if widowers share their daughter-in-law with their sons, the children of that woman are the children of the sons, so that your legal grandchildren can be your own physiological children and, *vice versa*, if it is the fathers who are legally married to the woman, your legal brother can well be your own physiological son!

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I understand that Tibetans from other parts of the country rather despise this form of marriage. I have caught my caravaneers openly insulting central Tibetans as being *tchamadoong*-practicing. Also, when they are playing dice, I noticed that sometimes they invoke the *tchamadoong* to produce luck for them, so that she is a double kind of figure to whom they cannot be entirely indifferent: they despise her and yet, at the same time, she can bring them luck.

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I do not know how far the existence of the *tchamadoong* has been reported in anthropological circles heretofore. Personally, I have never heard of this system before, except on the spot, and I am very keen to go back and study it. The case to which we came closest was the governor in the western province of Tibet, named Ngari Korsum. He was living in the capital, Gartok, when we were there. He was a central Tibetan sent by the central government to govern that province, and with him were his two sons and their one wife. She was a *tchamadoong*, the wife of the boys, the father sharing her with his sons. I was shown a photograph of her, taken by a Tibetan who had a camera from India, and that is the closest I have been, so far, to such a woman. I understand that in southern India there is a similar practice, in which a father is entitled to enjoy his daughter-in-law as long as his son is a minor, but this practice